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TYPE LOCALITIES OF BIRDS DESCRIBED FROM CALIFORNIA

BY

JOSEPH GRINNELL

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN ZOOLOGY

Volume 38, No. 3, pp. 243-324, 1 map

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TYPE LOCALITIES OF BIRDS DESCRIBED FROM CALIFORNIA

BY

JOSEPH GRINNELL

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JOSEPH GRINNELL

(Contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California)

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INTRODUCTION

The rules of nomenclature require the permanent employment of the first name, of fairly certain application, given to each kind of animal. In the more recent refinements of taxonomy, when it has become desirable to designate by name forms distinguished but slightly from one another, the correct application of any name already proposed in a group requires careful heed to the minor features not only of the type specimen but often additionally to the characters in mass shown by series of specimens from the type locality. Not infrequently a type specimen has become lost or damaged, and then, even more, *topotypes* are needed to settle the applications of names. In any case, the type locality needs to be known as exactly as possible, often far more precisely as to geographical position than may have been indicated in connection with the original published description or in any subsequent literature.

Ever since my interest became centered in the systematics of the birds of California I have kept note of facts and ideas pertaining to this often vital question of exact type locality; and latterly I have made special effort, in other museums and through correspondence,

the label he wrote. The skin is now no. 2829, U. S. National Museum [examined by me last, forwarded, November 29, 1930].

This bird had thus, supposedly, passed from Townsend through Audubon's hands to Baird, before the present oldest label was written. The characters of the skin show indubitably that it could not have come from Santa Barbara as stated by Audubon (*loc. cit.*). Also Townsend himself was in the Hawaiian Islands on the date given, and never was in California at all, in so far as I can learn; the month given, too, is impossible for the plumage condition of the bird bearing this label. It is well known that the data accompanying Townsend's specimens were, in many cases, erroneous (*vide* Ridgway, *loc. cit.*); it is even not certain that any of them were supplied with labels before leaving Townsend's hands (see Stone, Auk, 47, 1930, p. 415). That the bird could have come from near the mouth of the Columbia River, as suggested by Ridgway, is for several reasons not at all likely. There is no comparable skin from anywhere north of California in either the National Museum or the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology; nor can I match it with any skin from south of Santa Cruz County, California. The type falls in accurately with skins from the San Francisco Bay region. The real collector of the specimen is unknown.

Type locality, "Santa Barbara, California"; but, for reasons given above, with little doubt SAN FRANCISCO, San Francisco County.

Lophortyx catalinensis Grinnell, Auk, 23, July, 1906, p. 262.

[= *Lophortyx californica catalinensis* Grinnell.]

Type, male adult; skin in good condition; collected by J. Grinnell, November 25, 1904; orig. no. 6134, coll. J. G.; now no. 32040, Mus. Vert. Zool.

Type locality, [the cañon immediately back of] Avalon, SANTA CATALINA ISLAND, Los Angeles County.

Callipepla gambeli deserticola Stephens, Auk, 12, October, 1895, p. 371.

[= *Lophortyx gambelii gambelii* Gambel.]

Type, male [not "♀"] adult; skin in good condition; collected by Frank Stephens, January 15, 1890; orig. no. 4969, F. S.; now no. 264, coll. San Diego Society of Natural History. [Examined by me January 7, 1930; forwarded.] A female "type" is also designated in the original description, from "Walters" [= Mecca], Colorado Desert, Riverside County; but the first-designated specimen is here considered the type, and hence its place of capture the type locality, as below.

Type locality, PALM SPRINGS, "100" [= 450] feet altitude, Colorado Desert, Riverside County.

Rallus elegans, var. **obsoletus** Ridgway, Am. Naturalist, 8, February, 1874, p. 111.

[= *Rallus obsoletus obsoletus* Ridgway.]

Type, skin, in fair condition, taken down from mount; [sex ?] seemingly old adult; collected by Dr. George Suckley in March, 1857; no. 6444, U. S. Nat. Mus. [Examined by me October 26, 1929.]

Type locality, SAN FRANCISCO, San Francisco County.

Rallus levipes Bangs, Proc. New England Zool. Club, 1, June 5, 1899, p. 45.

[= *Rallus obsoletus levipes* Bangs.]

Type, female adult; skin in good condition; collected by Frank Stephens, February 23, 1886; orig. no. 2944, coll. F. S.; then no. 678 coll. E. A. and O. Bangs [examined by me February 3, 1922]; now no. 100678, Mus. Comp. Zool. (*vide* Bangs, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., 70, 1930, p. 167).

Type locality, NEWPORT LANDING, "Los Angeles County" [= Orange County].

Rallus yumanensis Dickey, Auk, 40, January [10], 1923, p. 90.

[= *Rallus obsoletus yumanensis* Dickey.]

Type, male adult; skin in good condition; collected by May Canfield, May 15, 1921; orig. no. 229, coll. L. M. Huey; now no. J 1039, coll. Donald R. Dickey. [Re-examined by me, April 15, 1930.]

Type locality, valley of lower Colorado River, near BARD, Imperial County.

Rallus virginianus pacificus Dickey, Condor, 30, September 28, 1928, p. 322.

[= *Rallus limicola pacificus* Dickey.]

Type, male, in first winter plumage; skin in good condition; collected by A. J. van Rossem, December 21, 1913; orig. no. 5967, coll. A. B. Howell; now no. 11337, coll. Donald R. Dickey. [Examined by me April 15, 1930.]

Type locality, five miles west of CORONA, Riverside County.

Porzana Jamaicensis, var. **coturniculus** Ridgway, Am. Naturalist, 8, February, 1874, p. 111.

[= *Creciscus jamaicensis coturniculus* (Ridgway).]

Type, [sex ?], apparently in first fall plumage (see comments by Brewster, Auk, 24, 1907, p. 207); skin in poor condition, taken down from mount; no original data; registered at the Smithsonian Institution, October 13, 1859; received from, though not necessarily collected by, T. C [originally published "G"]. Martin; now no. 12862, U. S. Nat. Mus. [Examined by me October 29, 1929.]

Type locality, FARALLON ISLANDS, San Francisco County.

Aegialitis nivosa Cassin, in Baird, Pac. R. R. Repts., 9, 1858, p. 696.

[= *Charadrius nivosus nivosus* (Cassin).]

Type, [sex ?], skin; collected by Lieut. W. P. Trowbridge, May 8, 1854; once no. 6600, U. S. Nat. Mus. (see Stone, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1899, p. 29). Not now there; the National Museum records show that this specimen was sent to Henry E. Dresser, of England, May 20, 1872 (*vide* C. W. Richmond, MS).

The Dresser collection found its way into the Victoria University, Manchester (Sharpe, in Hist. Colls. Nat. Hist. Depts. British Mus., 2, 1906, p. 340). I inquired of the present Keeper of the Manchester Museum, Dr. G. H. Carpenter, who thereupon with the kindly assistance of Mr. T. A. Coward instituted search for this type. Under date February 5, 1931, Dr. Carpenter writes me that no trace of the speci-

men can be found. The Dresser collection reached the Museum in 1898, and it is suggested that, during the 26 years gone by since the type in question was transmitted from the U. S. National Museum, Dresser may have exchanged it or given it elsewhere, not realizing its special value.

Type locality, Presidio, in SAN FRANCISCO, San Francisco County.

Strepsilas melanocephalus Vigors, Zool. Journ., 4, [January,] 1829, p. 356.

[= *Arenaria melanocephala* (Vigors).]

Type: "Two specimens of this bird were . . . brought home by the expedition" (Vigors, Zool. Voyage Blossom, 1839, p. 29). Neither now known to me to exist; apparently not in the British Museum, where they might be expected to be (*vide* P. R. Lowe, *in litt.*, March 18, 1930).

Type locality, not given in connection with the original description, nor elsewhere that I know of. From among the localities visited by the Blossom, the most likely one, all things considered, from which this species could have been obtained, is MONTEREY, Monterey County; and this place I therefore now fix as the type locality. The Blossom was there twice, January 1 to 5, 1827, and October 29 to November 17, 1827. The collector of the two specimens "brought home" was doubtless surgeon Alexander Collie.

Ereunetes occidentalis Lawrence, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., "April" [by June 30], 1864, p. 107.

[= *Ereunetes mauri* Cabanis.]

Type, male, in first nuptial plumage; skin in fair condition. The original Gruber-written label, on ruled blue paper, reads on one side as follows: "Least Sandpiper male. | Tringa Wilsonii. Nuttall. | Collected April 1862 by F. Gruber. | 542 Clay St. below Montgomery. | San Francisco, Cal."; measurements, etc., on other side. Another label is that of "Coll. Geo. N. Lawrence." This bears additionally to part of the above data the word "Type" and also the number "535." Now no. 45562, coll. American Museum of Natural History, New York City. [Forwarded and examined by me, November 2, 1930.]

Type locality, "Pacific coast; California, Oregon" (Lawrence, *loc. cit.*). More exactly, from above evidence, SAN FRANCISCO, San Francisco County.

Recurvirostra occidentalis Vigors, Zool. Journ., 4, [January,] 1829, pp. 356-357.

[= *Recurvirostra americana* Gmelin.]

Type, not known to me to be now in existence; it might have once been in the British Museum, but it is not there now (*vide* P. R. Lowe, *in litt.*, March 18, 1930).

Type locality: "It was found abundantly at San Francisco" (Vigors, Zool. Voyage Blossom, 1839, p. 28). This was during the visits of the Blossom to that place, November 7 to December 28, 1826, and November 19 to December 3, 1827. The bird figured in the Zoology of the Voyage of the Blossom (pl. 12) is in winter plumage and was doubtless collected during one of those visits, by surgeon Alexander Collie. Hence SAN FRANCISCO, San Francisco County.

Larus occidentalis wymani Dickey and van Rossem, Condor, 27, July 15, 1925, p. 163.

[= *Larus occidentalis wymani* Dickey and van Rossem.]

Type, male adult; skin in excellent condition; collected by A. J. van Rossem, May 22, 1925; orig. no. 8329, coll. A. J. van R.; now no. 15250, coll. Donald R. Dickey. [Examined by me April 15, 1930.]

Type locality, SANTA CATALINA ISLAND, Los Angeles County. More exactly, the small flat islet on the northwest side of this island, just off the cove at the "isthmus" (A. J. van Rossem, MS).

Larus Californicus Lawrence, Annals Lyc. Nat. Hist. New York, 6, March, 1854, pp. 79-80.

[= *Larus californicus* Lawrence.]

Type, male adult, in winter plumage; skin in fair condition though dirty. The oldest of the three labels bears data as follows: "Coll. Geo. N. Lawrence [printed] | Larus californicus ♂ | California 663 [the Baird Catalogue number] || Presented by | E. S. Holden | — Type — ." Now no. 46070, American Museum of Natural History. [Forwarded and examined by me May 3, 1930.] "The specimen described was presented to me by E. S. Holden, Esq., who shot it on the San Joaquin River, near Stockton" (Lawrence, *loc. cit.*).

Type locality, San Joaquin River near STOCKTON, San Joaquin County.

Larus Heermanni Cassin, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 6, "October" [= December 31], 1852, p. 187.

[= *Larus heermanni* Cassin.]

Type, "cannot be found" (*vide* Stone, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1899, p. 28). ". . . Discovered by Adolphus L. Heermann, M. D.," probably in 1851; found "most numerous in the harbor of San Diego in the month of March . . ." (Cassin, Illustr. Birds Calif., Texas, etc., 1856, p. 28). Evidently several specimens were preserved by Heermann; adult and immature are shown on Cassin's plate 5 (*op. cit.*).

Type locality, "coast of California at San Diego." Hence, SAN DIEGO, San Diego County.

Gelochelidon nilotica vanrossemi Bancroft, Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 5, December 10, 1929, p. 284.

[= *Gelochelidon nilotica aranea* (Wilson).]

Type, male adult, "breeding"; skin in good condition; collected by A. J. van Rossem, May 21, 1928; orig. no. 12278; now no. 22838, coll. Donald R. Dickey. [Examined by me April 15, 1930.]

Type locality, an island in SALTON SEA, Imperial County.

Sterna Pikei Lawrence, Annals Lyc. Nat. Hist. New York, 6, April, 1853, p. 3.

[= *Sterna paradisaea* Brünnich.]

Type, "from the cabinet of Nicolas Pike, Esq., of Brooklyn, L. I. . . ." It evidently passed into the possession of George Newbold Lawrence; for Coues (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1862, p. 550)